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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor: Bob Ford, 808 Hatchie, Brownsville, TN 38012 <editorthemigrant@gmail.com>

Associate Editors:

Susan McWhirter, 274 Beech Grove Road, McMinnville, TN 37110 <snmcwhirter@gmail.com>
and
Martha Waldron, 1014 Murray Hill Lane, Memphis, TN 38120 <martha.waldron@gmail.com>

State Count Compiler: Ron Hoff, 166 Chahyga Way, Loudon, TN 37774 <webe2brdrs@gmail.com>

Season Editor: Graham Gerdeman <grahamgerdeman@gmail.com>

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West Tenn. - Allan Trently, 580 East Lafayette Street, Jackson, TN 38301 <Allan.Trently@tn.gov>

Curator: Dr. Stefan Woltmann, Austin Peay State University, 601 College St., Clarksville, TN 37044
<woltmanns@apsu.edu>

Webmaster: Amy Wilms, 3499 S. Bird Sanctuary Rd., Connorsville, IN 47331 <wilmsab@indianaaudubon.org>

The Tennessee Warbler (TOS Newsletter) Editor: Theresa Graham, 155 Irwin Ave., Oakland, TN 38060
<2graham@bellsouth.net>

The TOS website can be found at: www.tnbirds.org

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STATUS OF CLAY-COLORED SPARROW IN TENNESSEE THOUGH 2021

Richard L. Knight
Johnson City, TN

Clay-colored Sparrows (*Spizella pallida*) have been regarded as accidental visitors or very rare transients in Tennessee. Robinson (1990) cited just two acceptable records in the state. Somershoe and Sloan (2015) listed an additional dozen records from 1997 to 2013. However, this latter publication covered just the early years of a period of dramatic increase in records within the state that began around the turn of the century. Through autumn 2021 the number of records in Tennessee has risen to at least 42. Indeed, Clay-colored Sparrows have occurred nearly annually over the last two decades, having been seen in 17 of 20 years from 2002 through 2021. Therefore, a review of this changed status seems warranted.

Tennessee's first record of Clay-colored Sparrow was of a singing bird observed 30 April to 2 May 1933 in a Johnson City yard (Tyler 1933). The next occurrence was on 17 October 1969 when an individual was captured in a mist net in Hardin County (Patterson and Patterson 1969). That bird died and was preserved as a scientific specimen now housed with the rest of the Albert Ganier collection of Tennessee birds at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science. The state's third record was of a bird seen 18 October 1997 in Lake County (Somershoe and Sloan 2015). Although it would be nearly five years before another sighting, this was the start of the recent surge.

The years 2002 through 2009 produced eight more sightings. Clay-colored Sparrows have since been seen each year from 2011 through 2021, with multiple sightings most of those years. The most in any one year thus far has been seven sightings in 2021 (one in spring and six in fall). The total number of records now sits at 42, with all but three of those occurring in the last 20 years. All records have been of single birds, except for a sighting of two birds on 1 October 2002 in Hamilton County (Knight 2003). Besides the one specimen cited above, two Clay-colored Sparrows have been banded in the state: one each at Seven Islands State Park in Knox County on 20 September 2015 (Knight 2016) and Whigg Meadow in Monroe County on 7 September 2018 (Lewis 2019). In addition, many of the records in recent years have been documented by photographs archived on eBird (2021).

The geographic distribution of these records has spanned the state in 21 counties from Shelby County in the west to Carter County in the northeast (Table 1). Somewhat surprisingly, East Tennessee has had the greatest number of sightings with 23 (55%), followed by West Tennessee with eleven (26%) and the mid-state with eight (19%). Perhaps the more widespread distribution of birders in the eastern region has contributed to this. Hamilton County has the most sightings to date with seven, followed by Knox County and Henry County with five each.

Most Clay-colored Sparrow sightings in Tennessee have occurred in the autumn (n = 36; 86%), ranging from 7 September to 29 November. Of these, the majority (69%) have been seen between 26 September and 18 October. The five spring sightings have occurred from 23 April to 13 May. At least two of these spring birds were noted to be singing. Two other sightings have occurred in early winter, both on Christmas Bird Counts: 15 December 2008 as a "count week" bird at Crossville (Hoff 2009) and 18 December 2011 at Memphis (Hoff 2012). The bird at Crossville had lingered in this location from 29 November (Knight 2009).

The core breeding range of Clay-colored Sparrows extends across the northern Great Plains, including the north-central United States and the Canadian prairie provinces. Over the last century this range has gradually expanded eastward into the eastern Great Lakes region to include New York and Pennsylvania and more recently has expanded further eastward reaching New England (Wright 2019). This area of eastern expansion would seem to be the source of most recent migrants that have been observed in Tennessee. Improved field guides and a broader understanding of identification criteria have likely contributed to this increase in sightings as well. Given the increase in sightings over the last two decades the status of Clay-colored Sparrow in Tennessee should be upgraded to occasional fall transient and rare spring transient.

Table 1. Tennessee counties with records of Clay-colored Sparrow.

County	Number of Records	County	Number of Records
Blount	3	Knox	5
Carter	1	Lake	2
Cumberland	1	Monroe	1
Davidson	1	Montgomery	1
DeKalb	1	Perry	2
Gibson	1	Sevier	2
Grundy	1	Shelby	3
Hardin	1	Sullivan	1
Hamilton	7	Sumner	1
Henry	5	Washington	1
Humphreys	1	**TOTAL**	**42**

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ROUND TABLE NOTES

PINE SISKINS FEEDING ON STRING ALGAE - Over a hundred Pine Siskins (*Spinus pinus*) arrived at our home in Townsend, Blount County on 20 November 2024, which is a typical amount we have most winters. By early December, there were over 300 Pine Siskins present. By mid-winter, we were hosting between 500-600 siskins. The habitat around our house is 3 acres (1.2 ha) of former cow pasture with mature oak trees (*Quercus spp*) and an 18m x 30m native garden with a Koi (*Cyprinus rubrofuscus*) pond that includes a shallow bird area adjacent to the waterfall. The siskins mainly spent the day in the native garden at the feeders, foraging on the native plants, or drinking and bathing in the bird area of the pond (Figure 1). We noted new foraging behaviors this year. The siskins consumed string algae (*Spirogyra spp*) from the pond, pulling the larger pieces onto the rocks to finish eating. We would remove the string algae from the deeper areas and spread it on the ground for them to consume. Multiple times we saw them eating algae draped on branches of shrubs and trees (Figure 2). Although primarily seed eaters, members of the finch family have been documented to feed on algae as an uncommon part of their diet. In Georgia algae was included in the list of foods American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) eat (Doresey 1963). An observer recorded Pine Siskins feeding on algae in British Columbia (https://birding.bc.ca); reviewers of the record indicated that siskins feeding on algae have been recorded a few times before. The siskins also spent a lot of time foraging on the grout of the bricks.

Figure 1. Pine Siskins collect string algae from a pool of water placed for birds and landscaping. Photo: Kathryn Barrow

Figure 2. Pine Siskins would often take string algae and drape it over branches to eat it. Photo: Kathryn Barrow.

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Dorsey, G.A. 1963. Notes on the food of the Goldfinch. The Oriole 28:72-73.

Kathryn Barrow, Townsend, Tennessee

UNUSUAL BATHING BEHAVIOR BY RUBY-THROATED HUMMIMGBIRD - In March 2024 we installed a 16-foot-long stream-like water feature in our wooded backyard to help control erosion and attract birds. The stream features a series of shallow shelves that meander and curve downhill into a pool of water. At the base of the feature is a rectangular flat-faced rock that makes the last "fall".

At about 0730 the morning of 4 April 2024, and on several days following, we observed an adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Archilochus colubris) land on the edge of the bottom flat-faced rock, grab hold of the edge, spread its wings, flatten its body, and allow the water to run over his body. The bird would sit there for about 7-10 seconds then flutter a bit in the flow and finally fly up to the nearest branch and preen. He would then fly to the nearest feeder in our yard.

We've been feeding hummingbirds for over 25 years at our home and have always had a variety of different water features. Hummingbirds often "bathe" in the rain or at a mister, but this is our first observation of a hummingbird that lowered itself into the water and immersed itself to bathe.

Steve Routledge and Cyndi Routledge, Clarksville, Tennessee

2024 TENNESSEE SPRING BIRD COUNTS

Ron Hoff
Loudon, Tenneessee

There were seven bird counts held this year. Two hundred and twelve observers recorded 213 species across the state. The weather was mild overall. Two counts had heavy rain in the morning. Several counts had breezy conditions but nothing severe. Temperatures ranged from a cool 48° F in Blount County to 81° F in Shelby County. Limpkin and Brown Pelican were both new species. Count highlights included Ruffed Grouse, Black Tern, Common Tern, Anhinga, American Bittern, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Horned Lark, Red Crossbill, Lark Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, and Painted Bunting. Loggerhead Shrike was missed for the third straight year. Long-billed Dowitcher and Olive-sided Flycatcher were recorded in record high numbers. The following species were all reported in the lowest or very low numbers since 2001: Solitary Sandpiper, Common Loon, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Cooper's Hawk, American Crow, Purple Martin, Barn Swallow, European Starling, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, and Prairie Warbler. Miles while owling was the lowest ever as well.

The counts in the table are arranged geographically from west to east. Taxonomic order follows the American Ornithological Society (AOS) Checklist of North and Middle American Birds, the 63rd supplement (2022) to the AOS Checklist. F/Y = feeder/yard watcher.

COUNTY SUMMARIES

Blount County (BLNT) – 0505-2205. Weather: foggy/partly cloudy/clear; wind 3-7 mph; 48-74° F. Count highlights included Sora, Limpkin, Least Bittern, Barn Owl, Marsh Wren, Red Crossbill, Pine Siskin, and Swainson's Warbler, and Canada Warbler. Observers: Jean J. Alexander, Kat Barrow, Rick Barrow, Christie Bass, Stephanie Crain, Wanda DeWaard, Marian D. Fitzgerald, Tom E. Fitzgerald, Sandy Graves, Kim J. Henry, Stephen P. Henry, Thomas D. Howe, Susan Hoyle, David M. Johnson, Kristine Johnson, Evan Kidd (compiler), Bridget McNew, Julie Moore, Logan Rosenberg, Martha Rudolph, Mary Tankersley, Gail Todd, Harumi Tsuruoka, June D. Welch, and Randy C. Winstead.

Elizabethton (ELIZ) - 0330-2115. Weather: overcast with light to moderate rain in pm; wind light and variable; 56-74° F. Count highlights included Ruffed Grouse, Virginia Rail, Marsh Wren, Hermit Thrush, Pine Siskin, and Dickcissel. Observers: Fred Alsop, Betty Bailey, Gary Bailey, Jerry Bevins, Rob Biller, Tammy Bright, Debi Campbell, J.G. Campbell, Ron Carrico, Diane Draper, Eric Draper, Harry Lee Farthing, Bambi Fincher, Dave Gardner, Rowan Gray, Bill Grigsby, Jean Henson, Neal Henson, Don Holt, David Irick, Lesley Jones, Jennifer Kennedy, David Kirschke, Rick Knight (compiler), Roy Knispel, Priscilla Little, Vern Maddux, Larry McDaniel, Joe McGuiness, Tom McNeil, Harry Norman, Alson Ovando, Brookie Potter, Jean Potter, Sherrie Quillen, Pete Range, Judi Sawyer, Chris Soto, Bryan Stevens, and Kim Stroud.

Hamilton County (HAML) – 0530-1930. Weather: partly cloudy/light rain; wind variable; 67-78° F. Count highlights included Sora, American Bittern, Least Bittern, and twenty-nine

species of warblers. Observers: Harold Birch, Kevin Calhoon (compiler), Rhonda Carty, Kent DuBois, Bill Haley, Daniel Jacobson, Stephen Johnson, Kristin Jones, Stephanie Jones, Tim Lenz, William Otis, Pete Robinson, Tommie Rogers, Tim Russell, Luke Thompson, Libby Wolfe, and Nolan Wright.

Knox County (KNOX) – 0457-1858. Weather: rain in the morning/cloudy; wind SW 5-10 mph; 64-78° F. Notable sightings included Chuck-will's-widow, Merlin, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Lincoln's Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, and Black-throated Blue Warbler. Observers: Amy Abercrombie, Robert Abercrombie, Matt Alexander, Austin Angel, Aylee Angel, Zachary Arnold, Joanna Bailey, Caroline Ballinger, Karin Beuerlein, Frank Bills, Meredith Boatman, Eric Bodker, Sharon Bostick, Jesse Brass, Doug Bruce, Maureen Carrol, Martha Culbertson, James Davis, Tara Davis, Jeremy Dotson, Cohen Eastridge, K. Dean Edwards (compiler), Chuck Estes, Melinda Fawver, Ron Hoff, Susan Hoyle, Kathy Jinks, Kristine Johnson, Bill Keeler, Evan Kidd, Luke Lewis, Rita Lewis, Robert Marvinney, Morton Massey, Janet Meier, Dollyann Myers, Tim Obrock, Natalie Pheasant, Pat Phillips, Patrick Rakes, Thomas Reiter, Martha Rudolph, Michael Ryon, Beth Schilling, Colin Sumrall, Laura Tappan, Melissa Tomamichel, Chris Welsh, and Shane Williams.

Montgomery County (MONT) – 0320-1530. Weather: sunny and calm early/very windy later; wind NE 0-11 mph; 54-75° F. Sighting highlights included Red-breasted Merganser, Olive-sided flycatchers, Bell's Vireo, and Dickcissels. Observers: Elaine Foust (compiler), Debbie Hamilton, Steve Hamilton, Sherrie Hanson, Daniel Moss, Cyndi Routledge, Steve Routledge, Rick Shipkowski, Sue Shipkowski, Jason Wogsland, and Randi Wogsland.

Nashville (NASH) – 0410-1619. Weather: thunderstorms and rain early; 60-80° F. Count highlights included Red-breasted Merganser, Herring Gull, Snowy Egret, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Bank Swallow, Marsh Wren, 30 species of warblers, Lincoln's Sparrow and Dickcissel. Observers: Krista Allen, Rachel Anderson, Jim Arnett, Jenna Atma, Kim Bailey, Sandy Bivens, Kevin Bowden, Clea Bradfield, Susan Bradfield, Trae Bradfield, Lise Brown, Deana McNett Burke, Richard Connors, Laura Cook, Samantha D'Anna, Mark Deutschmann, Brad Dowd, Bob English, Frank Fekel, Avery Fish, Fremont family, Steve Goodbred, Barbara Harris (compiler), Denis Lovell, Tim Loyd, Joe McLaughlin, Tera Rica Murdock, Ken Oeser, Tom Seadon, Jan K. Shaw, Kathy Shaw, Sheila Shay, Margaret Shelman, Danny Shelton, Chris Sloan, Laura Smith, Michael Smith, Shelley Smith, Anne Snyder, Marcus Snyder, Sherlene Spicer, Lisa Stevenson, Nick Stockmaster, Kren Teren, Pandy Upchurch, Rita Venable, Shelby Wabinga, LinnAnn Welch, Grant Winter, Paul Yoder, and Mary Zimmerman.

Shelby County (SHLB) – 0700-1900. Weather: partly cloudy; wind variable 2-15 mph; 56-81° F. Numerous highlights included Virginia Rail, 18 species of shorebirds, Brown Pelican, Barn Owl, Peregrine Falcon, Alder Flycatcher, Pine Siskin, Lark Sparrow, twenty-nine species of warblers, and Painted Bunting. Observers: Judith Barrie, Larry Chitwood, Sophie Dismukes, Andrew Gafford, Adrian Hall, Elizabeth Hall, Rob Harbin, Van Harris, Margaret Jefferson, Cindy Martin, John Martin, Morgan (Walt) Mattingly, Dick Preston (compiler), Ryan Pudwell, Cameron Rutt, Mary Schmidt, Norman Soskel, Cliff VanNostrand, Deon VanNostrand, Jim Varner, Tricia Vesely, and Martha Waldron.

2024 Spring Counts DATE	SHLB 11-May	MONT 11-May	NASH 4-May	HAML 4-May	KNOX 4-May	BLNT 11-May	ELIZ 4-May	Totals
SPECIES								
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
Canada Goose	216	40	71	149	203	152	391	1222
Wood Duck	24	10	49	28	10	29	35	185
Blue-winged Teal	26	-	6	21	-	2	4	59
Northern Shoveler	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
American Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Mallard	48	6	104	52	51	117	96	474
Green-winged Teal	-	-		-	-	-	1	1
Lesser Scaup	-	-	15	4	-	-	-	19
Hooded Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	11
Common Merganser	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	5
Red-breasted Merganser	-	1	11	-	-	-	-	12
Northern Bobwhite	-	9	16	-	-	1	-	26
Wild Turkey	4	10	30	4	2	32	23	105
Ruffed Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pied-billed Grebe	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	4
Rock Pigeon	88	4	13	121	34	12	117	389
Eurasian Collared-Dove	4	-	4	5	-	4	1	18
Mourning Dove	99	46	110	90	108	146	223	822
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	2	27	2	7	15	4	64
Common Nighthawk	5	1	-	1	-	7	-	14
Chuck-will's-widow	2	2	2	-	1	10	8	25
Eastern Whip-poor-will	-	-	14	1	-	1	28	44
Chimney Swift	42	8	54	62	55	145	168	534
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	49	10	12	4	8	10	9	102
Virginia Rail	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Sora	8	-	-	2	-	2	-	12
American Coot	1	-	2	6	-	-	-	9
Limpkin	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Black-necked Stilt	75	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Killdeer	60	11	17	14	24	16	29	171
Semipalmated Plover	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	6
Stilt Sandpiper	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
Dunlin	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Least Sandpiper	465	-	5	2	4	-	27	503
White-rumped Sandpiper	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Pectoral Sandpiper	17	-	-	1	-	-	2	20
Semipalmated Sandpiper	43	-	-	-	-	-	3	46
Western Sandpiper	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Short-billed Dowitcher	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Long-billed Dowitcher	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	85
Wilson's Snipe	3	-	-	3	1	-	-	7
Spotted Sandpiper	5	-	10	11	9	2	49	86
Solitary Sandpiper	9	-	4	6	8	-	27	54
Lesser Yellowlegs	114	-	-	1	1	-	5	121
Greater Yellowlegs	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	4
Wilson's Phalarope	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

2024 Spring Counts DATE	SHLB 11-May	MONT 11-May	NASH 4-May	HAML 4-May	KNOX 4-May	BLNT 11-May	ELIZ 4-May	Totals
SPECIES								
Shorebird sp.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Ring-billed Gull	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	3
Herring Gull	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Least Tern	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Black Tern	1	-			-	-		1
Common Tern	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Forster's Tern	-	-	5	-	7	-	-	12
Tern sp.	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Common Loon	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Anhinga	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Double-crested Cormorant	3	2	303	42	92	32	80	554
American White Pelican		-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Brown Pelican	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
American Bittern	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Least Bittern	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Great Blue Heron	28	10	73	42	36	41	76	306
Great Egret	6	1	12	-	3	1	2	25
Snowy Egret	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Western Cattle Egret	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Green Heron	9	1	3	6	11	15	21	66
Black-crowned Night-Heron	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	3
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	3	-	-	-	-	3	4	10
Black Vulture	51	29	205	184	13	7	111	600
Turkey Vulture	39	65	29	36	25	31	96	321
Osprey	2	-	18	26	34	15	13	108
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Cooper's Hawk	2	1	4	1	1	1	3	13
Accipiter sp.	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Bald Eagle	21	-	6	3	6	1	7	44
Mississippi Kite	146	1	-	-	-	-	-	147
Red-shouldered Hawk	17	6	8	4	12	14	6	67
Broad-winged Hawk	1	-	6	1	2	2	8	20
Red-tailed Hawk	7	6	17	8	10	7	14	69
Barn Owl	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	3
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	-	3	-	4	-	11	20
Great Horned Owl	3	-	2	1	1	-	1	8
Barred Owl	14	5	8	1	3	1	8	40
Belted Kingfisher	6	3	8	5	9	8	25	64
Red-headed Woodpecker	18	6	5	16	2	3	16	66
Red-bellied Woodpecker	99	22	85	59	85	58	87	495
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	9
Downy Woodpecker	66	9	58	30	60	46	31	300
Hairy Woodpecker	5	2	2	3	5	5	8	30
Northern Flicker	3	2	10	10	4	13	52	94
Pileated Woodpecker	23	5	32	8	20	17	46	151
American Kestrel	5	5	5	-	1	1	9	26
Merlin	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

2024 Spring Counts DATE	SHLB 11-May	MONT 11-May	NASH 4-May	HAML 4-May	KNOX 4-May	BLNT 11-May	ELIZ 4-May	Totals
SPECIES								
Peregrine Falcon	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Great Crested Flycatcher	34	22	38	41	27	39	30	231
Western Kingbird	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Eastern Kingbird	23	16	41	30	29	32	66	237
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	7	1	-	-	-	-	9
Eastern Wood-Pewee	39	31	61	16	9	25	31	212
Acadian Flycatcher	32	23	39	-	1	1	16	112
Alder Flycatcher	1	-			-	-		1
Willow Flycatcher	-	5	-	-	1	3	-	9
Least Flycatcher	2	-	4	-	-	-	15	21
Eastern Phoebe	19	7	18	20	27	50	96	237
White-eyed Vireo	59	18	94	18	35	38	18	280
Bell's Vireo	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Yellow-throated Vireo	7	4	16	9	5	4	12	57
Blue-headed Vireo	-	1	2	-	-	6	49	58
Philadelphia Vireo	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	6
Warbling Vireo	8	2	21	-	-	-	15	46
Red-eyed Vireo	71	18	102	57	76	122	343	789
Blue Jay	99	16	107	53	90	104	151	620
American Crow	59	47	76	45	119	101	280	727
Fish Crow	12	-	6	13	16	12	12	71
Crow sp.	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Common Raven	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	13
Carolina Chickadee	92	27	105	73	163	122	143	725
Tufted Titmouse	110	27	141	66	136	129	158	767
Horned Lark	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Bank Swallow	6	-	2	-	-	-	-	8
Tree Swallow	7	1	50	16	103	115	154	446
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	19	7	83	79	37	45	49	319
Purple Martin	35	-	57	3	33	11	68	207
Barn Swallow	89	44	66	67	83	89	213	651
Cliff Swallow	385	64	170	110	189	75	780	1773
Swallow sp.	-	-	-	-	23	-	-	23
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	-	5	-	3	2	3	15
Golden-crowned Kinglet	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Cedar Waxwing	107	32	84	76	56	196	64	615
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-	1	-	-	1	-	8	10
White-breasted Nuthatch	19	13	40	13	25	22	27	159
Brown-headed Nuthatch	-	-	-	16	5	11	-	32
Brown Creeper	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	59	19	143	44	75	51	77	468
Carolina Wren	78	43	137	45	200	146	203	852
House Wren	1	4	4	1	8	13	50	81
Winter Wren	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
Marsh Wren	4	-	1	-	-	2	1	8
Gray Catbird	5	5	17	16	45	42	54	184

2024 Spring Counts DATE	SHLB 11-May	MONT 11-May	NASH 4-May	HAML 4-May	KNOX 4-May	BLNT 11-May	ELIZ 4-May	Totals
SPECIES								
Brown Thrasher	16	12	33	27	56	37	64	245
Northern Mockingbird	71	42	73	49	100	86	94	515
European Starling	265	127	230	138	138	266	500	1664
Eastern Bluebird	71	45	89	47	74	110	134	570
Veery	2	3	9	2	1	1	14	32
Gray-cheeked Thrush	3	-	9	-	-	1	2	15
Swainson's Thrush	39	5	135	16	17	28	9	249
Hermit Thrush	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Wood Thrush	19	10	48	15	13	18	118	241
American Robin	119	34	110	116	280	368	742	1769
House Sparrow	44	18	18	26	17	27	30	180
House Finch	19	52	45	12	120	104	79	431
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Pine Siskin	1	-	-	-	-	3	1	5
American Goldfinch	35	29	87	16	120	78	279	644
Grasshopper Sparrow	1	2	-	-	1	2	1	7
Lark Sparrow	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Chipping Sparrow	12	15	22	65	20	26	123	283
Field Sparrow	5	22	100	3	95	43	43	311
Dark-eyed Junco	2	-	-	-	-	-	48	50
White-crowned Sparrow	9	-	-	-	2	-	1	12
White-throated Sparrow	14	-	8	3	16	3	5	49
Vesper Sparrow	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Savannah Sparrow	4	1	1	11	8	-	6	31
Song Sparrow	1	7	18	24	65	97	338	550
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	-	1	-	1	-	-	5
Swamp Sparrow	3	-	4	2	-	-	1	10
Eastern Towhee	18	23	78	33	110	52	179	493
Yellow-breasted Chat	18	8	45	13	21	35	11	151
Bobolink	49	-	39	38	33	-	-	159
Eastern Meadowlark	33	45	26	9	16	22	81	232
Orchard Oriole	19	11	44	8	27	16	24	149
Baltimore Oriole	9	1	18	3	2	-	18	51
Red-winged Blackbird	88	45	123	18	160	140	282	856
Brown-headed Cowbird	121	29	115	26	58	52	61	462
Common Grackle	49	9	99	40	104	161	315	777
Ovenbird	4	1	9	4	-	18	162	198
Worm-eating Warbler	3	-	3	2	-	2	28	38
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	2	9	1	2	10	34	63
Northern Waterthrush	2	1	5	6	4	-	4	22
Golden-winged Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Blue-winged Warbler	2	-	8	1	-	-	-	11
Black-and-white Warbler	61	1	11	8	3	9	103	196
Prothonotary Warbler	32	7	22	3	21	1	-	86
Swainson's Warbler	5	-	-	-	-	3	15	23
Tennessee Warbler	81	8	129	15	8	5	15	261
Nashville Warbler	-	1	4	1	-	-	-	6

2024 Spring Counts DATE	SHLB 11-May	MONT 11-May	NASH 4-May	HAML 4-May	KNOX 4-May	BLNT 11-May	ELIZ 4-May	Totals
SPECIES								
Kentucky Warbler	12	8	20	2	-	2	7	51
Common Yellowthroat	11	25	86	10	44	31	48	255
Hooded Warbler	15	1	17	6	8	36	231	314
American Redstart	22	2	8	14	28	17	33	124
Cape May Warbler	-	-	5	9	14	-	9	37
Cerulean Warbler	5	-	3	-	-	1	-	9
Northern Parula	79	23	63	6	33	29	89	322
Magnolia Warbler	13	1	20	2	4	8	4	52
Bay-breasted Warbler	6	1	15	3	4	3	7	39
Blackburnian Warbler	2	2	10	2	-	2	24	42
Yellow Warbler	11	3	30	13	14	12	15	98
Chestnut-sided Warbler	23	1	9	5	-	-	30	68
Blackpoll Warbler	3	-	27	74	6	1	8	119
Black-throated Blue Warbler	-	-	-	1	1	-	89	91
Palm Warbler	3	-	27	54	8	3	3	98
Pine Warbler	2	2	9	18	17	11	8	67
Yellow-rumped Warbler	9	1	12	18	22	3	21	86
Yellow-throated Warbler	9	5	23	12	4	14	54	121
Prairie Warbler	6	10	27	10	8	6	1	68
Black-throated Green Warbler	5	-	16	13	1	18	81	134
Canada Warbler	2	-	5	1	-	1	37	46
Wilson's Warbler	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	4
Summer Tanager	69	26	74	26	15	3	1	214
Scarlet Tanager	2	2	4	23	24	19	97	171
Northern Cardinal	169	70	311	130	379	264	321	1644
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	9	6	22	10	12	1	30	90
Blue Grosbeak	24	14	11	4	18	14	10	95
Indigo Bunting	118	50	156	52	84	109	184	753
Painted Bunting	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Dickcissel	34	17	5	-	-	-	1	57
Total individuals	5410	1686	5948	3130	4848	4903	10187	36112
Total species	174	114	150	134	129	133	151	213
Observers	22	10	53	18	49	20	40	212
Parties	14	5	11	7	38	13	16	104
Party hours	38	22.58	72.23	80	76.78	95.42	121	506.01
Hours by car	13.5	10	15.35	35	3.55	24.6	-	102
Hours by foot	24.5	12.58	56.88	45	73.23	70.82	-	283.01
Hours by canoe or other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miles by car	68	149	109	210	43.87	115.91	-	695.78
Miles by foot	22.5	7.9	53.25	20	77.05	47.33	-	228.03
Miles by canoe or other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hours owling	-	1.25	2.37	1	2.05	3.9	7	17.57
Miles owling	-	-	2.35	1	1.79	0.29	-	5.43
Feeder observers	-	4	-	-	-	10	-	14
Feeder hours	-	5.13	-	-	10.77	16.08	-	31.98

MINUTES OF THE SPRING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Knoxville, Tennessee
27 April 2024

The spring meeting of the Tennessee Ornithological Society was held in Knoxville, Tennessee and hosted by the Knoxville Chapter. President Michael Collins called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm; Secretary Cyndi Routledge determined there was a quorum. The minutes of the Fall meeting were approved unanimously.

OFFICER REPORTS

Treasurer – Pam Lasley – Assets for the Society at the end of 2023 were $447,216 including cash of $6,967 and fair market value of our Vanguard investments at $438,456. Our investments rebounded nicely with a gain in market value of $51,331. We transferred $10,000 to our operating checking account in 2023. The reserve for *The Migrant* issues to be printed reflects four issues were outstanding for 2023 at estimated current costs. There was no change in the long-term conservation reserve.

Non-investment revenue for the year was $15,537 for memberships and subscriptions and $6,206 from contribution including two memorial donations. Total expenses were $26,264. Publications and communications at $14,628 are our largest expense and includes 3 issues of *The Migrant*, MailChimp fees to electronically send *The Tennessee Warbler,* website maintenance contract, and expenses related to the integration of our local websites with the state. We awarded only $2,260 in research and conservation grants. A new expense this year is State Meeting Support as established at our Fall 2022 meeting. Our insurance was renewed this year at a lower rate of at $895 per year, prepaid for three years. Overall, the net revenues over expenses were $62,198, but operating net income was $10,867, which excludes the gain on our investments. Dividends and interest for 2023 were slightly lower at $15,389. Investment performance was 17.9% for 1 year return, 3-year annualized is 4.5%, 5 year is 8.9% and 10-year annualized return on investments is 7.3%.

Total individual membership decreased overall 1.8 % to 719, and we lost one institutional subscription. Total memberships stand at 734

As required by the Constitution, an examination of the 2023 financial records was performed by Finance Committee members Steve Routledge, Barbara Pyles, and Dick Preston who found the records to be in good condition.

For 2024 TOS remains in excellent financial shape. Revenues, expenses and publications are running as expected, with Individual memberships roughly the same as last year. The Conservation and Research Fund has funded $20,000 in grants this year which is our budgeted limit. *The Migrant* publications are running at their scheduled pace and *The Tennessee Warbler* e-mail seems to be working well. All publications are available on the TOS website. Unfortunately, our MailChimp subscription is no longer free, rather we are paying $29 per month for this service.

During the first quarter, our Vanguard investment account increased in value by $25,971 but we have withdrawn $20,000 to go to our operating account to fund this year's grants.

The full results of 2024 will be presented at the Spring 2025 meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Conservation Research Funding – Committee chair Michael Collins reported there was a large increase in proposals and funding requests. In 2024 we had 11 proposals submitted and awarded 9.

New Business – The subject of discontinuing printing hard copies of *The Migrant* was revisited, and a detailed discussion took place which included cost analysis. Danny Gaddy made the motion to move *The Migrant* to a digital format only with the effective date to be determined by the editorial staff. Seconded by Melinda Welton. Passed with one no vote and one abstention.

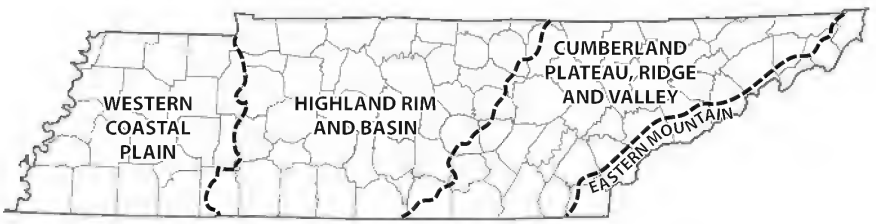
It was announced that the Fall 2024 meeting will be held in Memphis

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Routledge
Secretary

THE SPRING SEASON

Graham Gerdeman, Editor



1 March – 31 May, 2024

Warmer than average temperatures prevailed throughout the season across the state. Temperatures ranged from 2-4°F above normal, with a short spring heat wave in mid-April producing temperatures 8-10°F higher than normal in many areas. Most of the state started March fairly wet, followed by a dry spell lasting through April. That all changed in May, with above average rainfall throughout the state, much of it in the form of severe weather. Parts of east Tennessee received 8 inches of rain in the final week of May, and many rain stations across Tennessee reported a foot of rain for the month [1].

Rarities for the season included Fulvous Whistling Ducks in west Tennessee, Eurasian Wigeon in the east, a second state record of Broad-billed Hummingbird, and a Vermillion Flycatcher in Hamilton County.

Sightings are extracted from eBird [2], as well as submissions from regional compilers, the tn-birds listserv, and when necessary, verified social media posts. Comments on historical records rely on *Birds of Tennessee - A New Annotated Checklist* [3], archives of the tn-birds listserv as well as subsequent eBird records and submissions to the TBRC.

Regional compilers:
Western Coastal Plain Region: Dick D. Preston, Munford, TN
Ebird database: Tim Lenz, Chattanooga, TN

STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

ad - adult
au - audio recorded
ba - banded
Co - County
Cr - Creek
ers - earliest reported sighting
et al. - and others
fide - reported by
im - immature
L - Lake
lrs - latest reported sighting
max - maximum count
m.ob. - many observers
Mtn - Mountain
NP - National Park
NWR - National Wildlife Refuge
ph - photographed
R - River
SNA - State Natural Area
SP - State Park
WMA - Wildlife Management Area
yg - young

Locations: SBP - "Snow Bunting Peninsula" on Old Hickory Lake, Davidson Co; DRU - Duck River Unit of TN NWR, Humphreys Co; Ensley - Ensley Bottoms, including the EARTH Complex and TVA Lake, southwest Shelby Co; Lock 3 - Old Hickory Lake, Sumner Co; LBL - Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area

Black-bellied Whistling Duck: Reported in 16 counties, in all divisions of the state. Considered "accidental" outside of Shelby Co only a decade ago, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks continue to expand rapidly. Reports from Warren, Henderson, Anderson, and Marion counties were all county firsts in eBird. Marion Co (8) in a pond at the top of Sequatchie Mtn 7 Apr (ph. MR); Warren Co (12) was the highest count of a flock on Ball Park Road reported nearly daily 15 Apr–20 May (ph. RSh, DSh, m.ob.); Coffee Co (3) of the same ducks from Warren were reported across the county line 3/15 May (RDH, DMY, SNM); Lauderdale Co (5) at Chickasaw NWR 20 Apr (DR); Anderson Co (1) at Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery 5–9 May (PP, ph. JDa, TDa, m.ob.); Blount Co (1) on the Maryville-Alcoa Greenway 29 May (ph. EK); Davidson Co (21) at the Walter S. Davis Blvd Marsh was an extraordinary high count for Nashville 20 May (ph. FF, max., m.ob.); Dyer Co (16) in a yard in Newbern 9 May (ph. DMo); Hamilton Co (1) at Diamondhead Lake in Ooltewah 28 May (ph. JGr, WJ, m.ob.); Henderson Co (3) at Beech River WMA 17 May (ph. RS, VS); Humphreys Co (2) at DRU 25 May (RS); Obion Co (2) near Union City 22 May (ph. MM, BPB, RDH, DMY); Roane Co (2) at Emory Bend Wetland 7 May (ph. RK); Rutherford Co (2) at Old Fort Park 2 May (ph. JVM, m.ob.); Weakley Co (2) in Martin 24 May (MP); Wilson Co (3) at Old Hickory Lake–Cedar Creek Recreation Area 7 May (ph. KSz); and lastly, Shelby Co (118) was the high count at Ensley 25 Apr (JV, BFo, RH, CVN, max).

Fulvous Whistling Duck: Shelby Co (7) at Ensley 19 Apr (ph. AH, RH, m.ob.) and (1) bird reported there 2 May (ph. AH).

Cackling Goose: Hamilton Co (1) at the Publix Retention Pond on Hwy 321 17 Mar–14 Apr (ph. ABu, RBu, m.ob.) was a rare sighting for southeast TN; Hawkins Co (1) on John Sevier Lake 10 Mar (ph. SHu) was also notable; Williamson Co (1) the rare *B.h. minima* around Ward Circle in Brentwood continued through the season and is apparently a resident bird now (m.ob.).

Tundra Swan: Several continued from winter: Anderson Co (2) at Solway Park were last reported 12 Apr (WBl); Hawkins Co (2) continuing at John Sevier Lake were last reported 16 Mar (SHu); Knox Co (2) continuing at Melton Hill Lake were last reported 7 Apr (PP); Davidson Co (1) on Cleeces Ferry Rd was last reported 5 Mar (RSk); Dyer Co (2) at White Lake refuge 7–9 Mar (ph. KB, WBa, m.ob.).

Cinnamon Teal: Dyer Co (1) adult drake at Thorny Cypress WMA 11 Mar (ph. KB) and 14 Mar (ph. MAG, WBa); Stewart Co (1) adult drake at Barkley WMA on five occasions 24 Mar–2 Apr (ph. AT, RSk, m.ob.).

Eurasian Wigeon: Hawkins Co (1) adult drake on Sevier Lake 19–25 Mar (ph. SHu, LTa) was a county first and only the third record for east TN. There are now around 30 state records.

Surf Scoter: Davidson Co (3) at Radnor Lake 23 Apr (ph. RHe, FF, m.ob.).

White-winged Scoter: Hamilton Co (4) at Chickamauga Lake 7–23 Mar (EW, m.ob.).

Long-tailed Duck: Shelby Co (1) continued in Shelby Farms Park until last reported 23 Mar (ph. CVN, m.ob.).

Common Goldeneye: Franklin Co (1) young drake at Woods Reservoir was notably late (ph. TL); Rhea Co (2), a male and female pair were even more exceptionally late at Watts Barr Lake 18 May (ph. RSh, DSh), and (1) female still present 30 May (ph. GT).

Common Merganser: reported from 17 counties, all observed on the Cumberland Plateau or eastern mountains: Anderson, Cocke, Hancock, Hawkins, Jackson, Overton, Polk, Sevier, Sullivan, Campbell, Carter, Cumberland, Greene, Morgan, Scott, Washington, and Knox. Sevier Co (22) at Emerts Cove 2 Mar (KWa, max.) was the highest count.

White-winged Dove: Blount Co (1) continued from winter at Kettering Rd, reported 1 Mar/1 May by the homeowner (SGr); Madison Co (1) at Middle Fork Bottoms SP 17 May (AT); Wilson Co (1) in Lebanon 30 Apr (RWe); Shelby Co (5) was the highest count at Mud Island 19 Apr (ph. AT, RS, MAG, max).

Black-billed Cuckoo: Shelby Co (1) at Overton Park was the first reported sighting in the county since 2021 (ph. SDi, JV, m.ob.); Perry Co (1) reported at White Oak Ridge during nocturnal flight call count 12 May (RS, AT); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 23 May (RS, DR); Davidson Co (1) at Woodlawn Cemetery 15 May (ph. NS), and (1) at Green Door Gourmet 18 May (MS, m.ob.); Sumner Co (1) at Larkspur Conservation Area 19 May (au. TLo); Wilson Co (1) Cedar Forest Rd in Lebanon 4 May (HT); Williamson Co (1) at Marcella Vivrette Smith Park 11 May (ph. SGo); Putnam Co (1) at Bluetooth Hollow Heritage Farm 24 May (HT, MT).

Nighthawk sp: Davidson Co (1) in Nashville 25 Mar was exceptionally early (GG). Seen quickly while driving, and not well enough to rule out a vagrant Lesser Nighthawk.

Chimney Swift: Shelby Co (800) at Ensley 11 Apr was a notable high spring count (AT, RS, DR).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Tipton Co (1) west of Covington 21 Mar (MAG, ers.) was the earliest report.

Broad-billed Hummingbird: Tipton Co (1) west of Covington 19–22 Mar (ph. PD, MAG, m.ob.) constitutes a second state record.

Virginia Rail: Sullivan Co (7) at Meadow View Golf Course 13 Mar (BPo, JPo, max.); Polk Co (1) at Delano 16 Mar (RS, MBe); Bradley Co (1) at South Mouse Creek 16 Mar (RS, MBe); Blount Co (1) at Springfield Branch 20 Mar (TH); Hamilton Co (1) at Standifer Gap Marsh 9 Mar–18 Apr (ph. ABu, RBu); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 12 Apr (RS) and again 28

Apr (RSh); Perry Co (2) was the highest count at Gadwall Marsh 5,7 Apr (RS) where single birds were observed throughout the season; Shelby Co (2) was the highest count at Ensley 4 May ("Darin B").

Sora: Shelby Co (48) at Ensley 26 Apr (CRu) set a new high spring count for the state; mostly single birds reported elsewhere from 13 other counties.

Common Gallinule: Hamilton Co (1) continuing at Standifer Gap Marsh, last reported 11 Mar (WJ); Knox Co (1) at Gilbert Drive Wetland 13 Apr (MRy); Roane Co (1) adult at Heritage Center Greenways Area 21,24,27 May (ph. RK).

Purple Gallinule: Perry Co (1) adult at Gadwall Marsh 20–30 Apr (ph. VS, RS, m.ob.); Blount Co (1) adult at Kyker Bottoms Refuge 23–30 Apr (ph. RWi, m.ob.).

Limpkin: The spring season saw a sharp decline from the past year's irruption of this species. Reports from three counties: Humphreys Co (3) was the maximum count 2–3/14 Mar (max. SBr, MGa, m.ob.), last report was of (2) 24 Mar (SBr, MGa); Maury Co (1) long continuing bird on Big Oak Lake 21 Mar (ph. HD); Blount Co (1) on the Alcoa-Maryville Greenway continued 3 Mar–12 May (ph. EK, m.ob.), and (1) twelve miles away on the Little River 5 May (ph. LBH).

Sandhill Crane: Rhea Co (1) flying at Cedar Point Park 18 May (RSh, DSh) was late.

Black-necked Stilt: Shelby Co (1) at Maynard C. Stiles WTP 8 Mar (ers. ph. PJP) is the second earliest TN spring record.

American Avocet: Hamilton Co (1) at Heritage Landing 24 Apr (ph. TC); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 27 Apr (RS, ph. DR, AT); Shelby Co (3) at Ensley 28 Apr–6 May (ph. PJP, SDi, m.ob.) with (1) bird lingering until 30 May (lrs. ph. JV, CVN); Coffee Co (2) in a flooded field in Hillsboro 13 May (ph. SE); Marion Co (8) in a flyover flock in Jasper 12 May (max. KAC).

Black-bellied Plover: Davidson Co (3) at SBP 9 May (MS, ph. MJ, m.ob.); and Hamilton Co (1) at Chester Frost Park 9 May (ph. TL, m.ob.) were rare spring records for both metropolitan counties.

American Golden Plover: Crockett Co (200) on Larry Bettis Rd 10 Apr (ph. Max. MAG) was the highest count.

Upland Sandpiper: reported from eight counties: Shelby Co (3) was the high count at Shelby Farms Park 17 Apr (max. ph. CRu, JV, m.ob.), where single birds were reported 12,23 Apr / 1 May (m.ob.); (1) at Eagle Lake Refuge 21 Apr (Cru); and (1) at Ensley 17 May (AT); Dyer Co (2) near Finley 20 Apr (ph. RS, AT); Lauderdale Co (2) at Chickasaw NWR 20 Apr (MAG); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 27 Apr (AT); Stewart Co (1) at Cross Creeks NWR 17 May (ph. DR); Rutherford Co (1) at Rucker Rd Sod Farm 26 Apr (JWa); Knox Co (1) at Cherokee Farm 10 Apr (CW, m.ob.); Anderson Co (1) at University of Tennessee Arboretum 28 Apr (MCr, TCr).

Whimbrel: Stewart Co (1) at Cross Creeks NWR 27 May (ph. CR, SR, RS); Hamilton Co (2) at Chester Frost Park 27 May (TRu).

Hudsonian Godwit: Shelby Co (11) at Ensley 16–19 May (max. ph. AH, CRu, m.ob.), tying the highest state count set 21 May 2011 in Dyer Co. There was a final report of only five birds on 20 May (MRF, TEd).

Marbled Godwit: Stewart Co (1) at Britton Ford and seen later from Swayne Point, 15 Apr (DB, ph. RS, m.ob.); Lauderdale (9) at Chickasaw NWR 20 Apr (ph. DR, MAG, RS, AT); Roane Co (13) at Lakeshore Park 24 Apr (max. ph. RK, m.ob.) was a notably high count.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Shelby Co (695) at Ensley 29 Apr (max. CRu, JV) was a notable count.

Wilson's Snipe: Lauderdale Co (225) at Chickasaw NWR on 2 Apr (max. RS, VS) was notable.

Wilson's Phalarope: Shelby Co (1–8) at Ensley reported 28 Mar–9 May (m.ob.), Eight was the highest count 9 May (max. ph. TV, DDP); Lauderdale Co (1) at Chickasaw NWR 20 Apr (ph. DR, MAG) and (1) at TN-88 Bottoms 18 May (ph. AT); Stewart Co (2) at Cross Creeks NWR 7 May (ph. DR); Humphreys Co (2) at DRU 9 May (ph. WL, RMG).

Red-necked Phalarope: Williamson Co (1) at Harlinsdale Farms 24 May (ph. HM).

Solitary Sandpiper: Shelby Co (1) at Ensley 13 Mar (ers. CRu, JV) was early, (235) at Ensley 20 Apr (max. CRu) was notably high.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Shelby Co (1700) was the highest count at Ensley 29 Mar (max. CRu, AH, JV).

Willet: reported from 15 counties and all 3 grand divisions, Humphreys Co (150) at DRU 26 Apr (max. ph, CMo, JMo, KK) was a notably high count and by far the highest of the season.

Ruddy Turnstone: Davidson Co (1) and possibly 2 birds at SBP 9 May (ph. VS, RS); Hamilton Co (1) at Chester Frost Park 9 May (ph. TL, BDR, m.ob.); Lauderdale Co (1) at TN-88 Bottoms 18 May (ph. AT); Shelby Co (1) at Maynard C. Stiles WTP 19 May (PJP, CVN, m.ob.).

Stilt Sandpiper: Humphreys Co (4) at DRU 7 Apr (RS) and 23 May (RS, DR) were the most observed there; Lauderdale Co (33) was the highest count at Chickasaw NWR 6 May (ph. RS); Shelby Co (66) was the highest count at Ensley 9 May (max, ph. TV, DDP); Coffee Co (1) in Hillsboro 8 May (ph, RSh, DSh) was an uncommon spring sighting in the east of the state.

Sanderling: Hamilton Co (1) at Chester Frost Park 9 May (ph. TL, m.ob.); Anderson Co (1) at Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery 16 May (FB); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 23 May (ph. DR, RS).

Dunlin: reported from 12 counties: Shelby Co (1) at Ensley 13 Mar (ph. ers. JV, CRu) was notably early; Lauderdale Co (180) at Chickasaw NWR 10 May (max. ph. DR) was the most reported.

Baird's Sandpiper: Humphreys Co (16) at DRU was a high count for spring on 7 Apr (max. ph. RS); Rutherford Co (1) at Rucker Rd Sod Farm 6 Apr (ph. JWa, PS); Shelby Co (4) at Shelby Farms Park–Gardener Rd Marsh 3 Apr (ph. CVN) where single birds were also reported 9–11 Apr (ph. RP, CVN, DVN) and 7 May (ph. MCT); (1) individuals also reported from Ensley 1/10–12 Apr and 3 May (CVN, MCT, m.ob.).

White-rumped Sandpiper: widespread reports from 13 counties. Shelby Co (58) at Ensley 16 May (max. CRu, RH); and Humphreys Co (54) at DRU 25 May (RS) were the highest counts.

Western Sandpiper: Lauderdale Co (1) at Chickasaw NWR 7 Apr (ph. AT) and (3) on 19 Apr (RS, AT, MAG); Henderson Co (1) at Beech River WMA 30 Apr (AF); Shelby Co (5) at Ensley was the highest on 3 May (max. ph. MCT), individuals reported there on 28 Apr/6–8 May (AF, DDP, m.ob.), and (1) at Shelby Farms Park–Gardener Rd Marsh 26 Apr (CVN, DVN); Warren Co (1) at Caney Branch Rd 27/31 May (SNM); Sequatchie Co (1) in Dunlap 28 May (ph. RSh, DSh).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Shelby Co (750) at Ensley 14 May (AT) was the highest count.

Black-legged Kittiwake: Sumner Co (1) juvenile fly-by bird at Sanders Ferry Park 13 Mar (ph. TLo).

Laughing Gull: Roane Co (1) at Lakeshore Park 27 Apr (ph. RK); Davidson Co (1) at SBP 9/14/26 May (ph. RS, FF, m.ob.); Sumner Co (1) the same bird was seen from Lock 3 on 9 May (ph. TLo), also (1) at Drakes Creek 25 May (ph. TLo); Hamilton Co (1) Chester Frost Park 7/9 May (ph. JM, TL, m.ob.); Humphreys Co (1) immature bird at DRU 25 May (ph. RS, VS).

Franklin's Gull: Sumner Co (2) at Lock 3 on 7 May (ph. TLo) and (1) in the same location 17 May (ph. TLo).

American Herring Gull: reported from 17 counties: Sumner Co (7) from Lock 3 on 24 Apr (TLo); and Hamilton Co (7) at Chester Frost Park 30 Apr (KWh, SWh) were notable counts for their respective counties.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: lingering birds reported from 8 counties: Benton Co (4) at the Benton Co Landfill 5 Mar (max, RS) was the highest count.

Iceland Gull: Sumner Co (1) at Mallard Point Park 8 Mar (ph. TLo).

Least Tern: There were reports from 4 locations away from expected areas along the Mississippi River: Humphreys Co (2) at DRU 14 May (RS), and (1) 23 May (ph. RS, DR);

Henderson Co (1) at Beech River WMA 17 May was an apparent first county record (RS, VS); Sumner Co (1) at Lock 3 on 17 May (ph. TLo).

Caspian Tern: Hardin Co (20) at Pickwick Dam 30 Mar (AT, RS) and 21 Apr (AT, RS) were notable high counts.

Black Tern: reported from 12 counties across the state: Benton Co (54) from Camden WMA 9 May (max, ph. DR) was the highest count.

Common Tern: reported from 10 counties across the state: Hamilton Co (53) at Chester Frost Park 30 Apr (max, TL) was the highest count and sets a high count record for the county.

Red-necked Grebe: Hardin Co (2) from Bruton Branch Rec Area 13 Apr (ph. au. RS), where (1) was found previously 30 Mar (ph. AT, RS).

Eared Grebe: Davidson Co (2) continuing birds on J. Percy Priest L were last reported on 3 Mar (lrs. JHi).

Red-throated Loon: Davidson Co (6) was the highest count of continuing birds from winter on J. Percy Priest L, seen at Seven Points Rec Area 2 Mar (MS, PDC); the last report was of (3) birds 17 Mar (lrs. ph. RD).

Pacific Loon: Hamilton Co (1) single lingering birds reported from Booker T. Washington SP 15–25 Mar (ph. TL, m.ob.), from Mulkey Point 14 Mar (CS), from Wolftever Creek / Harrison Bay 15–16 Mar (ph. TL, m.ob.), and from Tennessee Riverwalk Robinson Bridge 2 Apr (lrs. ph. TL).

Common Loon: Davidson Co (100) from J. Percy Priest Dam 15 Mar was a notably high spring count (AF).

Anhinga: Reported from 9 counties, including several from east and middle TN: Anderson Co (1) at Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery 15 May (CN); Knox Co (1) soaring at Pellissippi Corporate Center 7 Apr (KDE); Davidson Co (1) flyover in Nashville 29 Apr (RNi); Humphreys Co (5) was the highest count at DRU where the species is breeding 27 Apr (ph. AT); Madison Co (1) at South Fork Refuge 6 May (ph. MCT); Haywood Co (4) at Hatchie NWR 27 Apr (ph. MAG, BF); Fayette Co (2) at Ghost River SNA 20 Apr (AH, m.ob.), and (1) at Wolf River WMA 9 May (DOH); Shelby Co (5) was the highest count at Meeman-Shelby Forest 22 May (JV, CVN, m.ob.); Dyer Co (4) at Bogota WMA 23 Apr (ph. MAG), and (4) at Moss Island WMA 25 May (BF).

Neotropic Cormorant: Williamson Co (1) flyover in Arrington 26 Apr (AT) establishes a first county record; Sumner Co (1) at Drakes Creek 23 Apr (ph. TLo); Hamilton Co (1) at Camp Jordan Park 8 May (ph. TL); Stewart Co (1) at Cross Creeks NWR 17 May (ph. DR); Humphreys Co (6) was the highest count at DRU 8 May (ph. VS, RS), including 2 young in the nest; Shelby Co (3) was the highest count at Robco Lake 26 Mar (CRu), where there were reports of (2) on 15 Mar (ph. CRu) and (1) on 24 Mar (CRu).

Glossy Ibis: Anderson Co (1) at Melton Lake Islands 24 Apr (ph. JDa, TDa); Rutherford Co (4) on Swamp Rd 28 Apr (ph. HB, m.ob.); Humphreys Co (3) at DRU 27 Apr (ph. CJo, JMo, KK), continuing until a single bird was last reported 11 May (CRu, RS); Shelby Co (1) at Ensley 28 May (ph. CRu, JV, CVN, RP).

White-faced Ibis: Lauderdale Co (6) at Chickasaw NWR 20 Apr (ph. DR, RS, AT); Anderson Co (1) at Melton Lake Islands 24 Apr (ph. JDa, TDa).

Least Bittern: Humphreys Co (4) at DRU 11 May (max. RS, CRu) was a notably high count.

Little Blue Heron: Humphreys Co (60) at DRU 22 May (max. RS, CRu) was a notably high estimate.

Tricolored Heron: Monroe Co (1) at Tellico Lake WMA 10–11 May (ph. CJo, BS).

Snowy Egret: Washington Co (1) on McInturff Rd 14 Apr (ph. DHu, m.ob.) was notable for far east TN; Hamilton Co (1) at Amnicola Marsh 6–7 Apr (KP, m.ob.) was also uncommon for the county; otherwise reported from 8 counties in middle and west TN; Humphreys Co (55) at DRU 27 May (max. ph. DR) was the highest.

American White Pelican: Dyer Co (590) along the Mississippi River 8 Apr (RS, VS, OF) was a notably high count.

Brown Pelican: Shelby Co (1) at Shelby Farms Park 5–7 May (ph. LH, AH, m.ob.).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Anderson Co (1) at Melton Lake Islands 27 Apr (ph. TDa, JDa).

Golden Eagle: Perry Co (1) soaring over Cane Creek Church 4 Mar (RS); Grundy Co (1) over a pasture in Palmer 17 Mar (RS).

Mississippi Kite: Shelby Co (257) at Eagle Lake Refuge 14 May (AT) establishes a new state high count; reported from every county in West TN, spring reports east of the Highland Rim remain noteworthy: Jackson Co (1) on Montgomery Rd in Cookeville 24 May (ph. RSh, DSh) was an apparent county first; Sequatchie Co (2) 18 May (ph. TJ); Hamilton Co (1) at Brainerd Levee 15 May (BDR); Loudon Co (1) along I-75 in Loudon (TYL) is also a county first in eBird; Blount Co (1) at Kyker Bottoms Refuge 19 May (ph. EK).

Rough-legged Hawk: Lake Co (1) continuing bird from winter at Jolly Landing was last reported 9 Mar (ph. WBa).

Burrowing Owl: Humphreys Co (1) the unique winter resident of the restricted New Johnsonville TVA plant was last observed on 3 Apr (TRo, LBH *fide* GG).

Short-eared Owl: Shelby Co (6) was the highest count of continuing birds at Shelby Farms Park 16 Mar (DVN, CVN). The latest report was of a single individual on 1 Apr (PJP).

Vermillion Flycatcher: Hamilton Co (1) on Pineville Rd seen for only one afternoon 28 April (ph. LT, TL, m.ob.).

Western Kingbird: Shelby Co (37) at President's Island 17 May (ph. AT) establishes a new state high count.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Reported from 10 counties, especially Rutherford and Wilson; Davidson Co (1) at Bells Bend Park 4 May (ph. RHe, LB), still a rare bird in the county. Decatur Co (10) on the Wyatt Farm was a notably high spring count (ph. AT, m.ob.).

Bell's Vireo: Another great spring for this species in Dyer Co (5) was the highest count at Thorny Cypress WMA 30 Apr (max. ph. MAG), with (2) also reported there 4/6 May (ph. WBa, m.ob.). There were (4) reported at Tumbleweed WMA–East unit 6 May (MAG, BBu), (2) on Great River Rd 18 May (ph. DR), and (1) on Everett Lake Rd 9 May (ph. KB); Madison Co (1) at Middle Fork Bottoms SP 30 Apr–2/5 May (ATr, ph. MAG, m.ob.) and again 26 May (ATr); Montgomery Co (2) on Ft. Campbell 11 May (RSk); Stewart Co (1) on Ft. Campbell 21 May (DM *fide* GG); Shelby Co (1) at Shelby Farms Park–Gardener Rd Marsh 28–30 Apr (au. Ph. CVN, DVN, m.ob.), and (1) returning for a third consecutive spring to a yard in Collierville 30 Apr (au. RH).

Cliff Swallow: Shelby Co (1500) at Ensley 11 Apr (RS, AT, DR) was a notably high count.

Red Crossbill: Benton Co (10) was the highest count where continuing from winter along Coxburg Rd 22 Apr (ph. DR). The presence of juvenile birds implies very rare breeding in middle TN. Reported in various numbers in the location 5 Mar–26 Apr. There were at least 3 other reports in unlikely locations: Grundy Co (4) was the highest count along Daus Mtn Rd 18 Mar (ph. RSh, DSh) where (2) birds were initially reported 14 Mar (ph. TJ) and last reported 12 Apr (TJ); Hamilton Co (14) near Sale Creek (ph. KWh, SWh) was the highest where numbers from 1–7 were reported 22 Apr–28 May (ph. JM, m.ob.).

Pine Siskin: Blount Co (300) was the highest average of large numbers continuing from winter in a Townsend backyard 20 Mar–20 Apr (KBa).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Madison Co (18) at Middle Fork Bottoms SP 17 May (ph. AT) was the highest count, and the highest count in eBird for TN in the past decade. Though reported in single digits in suitable habitat across the state, according to eBird's status and trends data, Grasshopper Sparrow observations in TN declined by 50% from 2012–2022 [2] - a timeframe during which the number of birders increased exponentially.

Lark Sparrow: A few reports around greater Nashville were notable: Davidson Co (1) at Woodlawn Cemetery 17 Apr (ph. NS), and (1) at Shelby Bottoms Park–Cornelia Fort Airpark 18 Apr (ph. ADu, m.ob.); Williamson Co (1) at Old Charlotte Pike 29 Apr (ph. JA).

Harris's Sparrow: Perry Co (1) at Lick Creek Farm continued at least through April, reported 11/21 Apr (ph. AT, RS).

Savannah Sparrow: Shelby Co (300) at Chickasaw NWR 19 Apr was a notably high spring count (max. RS, AT, MAG).

Henslow's Sparrow: Davidson Co (1) at Shelby Bottoms Park–Cornelia Fort Airpark 24–25 Apr (ph. DPr, BW); Anderson Co (1) at Melton Lake Islands 6 Apr (ph. TDa, JDa); Benton Co (11) was the most reported from the Big Sandy River Prairie 5 May (ph. AT); Montgomery Co (18) on Ft. Campbell 11 May (max. RSh).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Henry Co (1) at Britton Ford NWR 15 Apr (WP, ph. DB, RS); Hardeman Co (1) in Whiteville 19 Apr (ph. JW); Fayette Co (2) in Somerville 22 Apr (ph. JWb); Crockett Co (1) at TN Safari Park in Alamo 26 Apr (ph. NW); Lauderdale Co (1) at Chickasaw NWR 19–20 Apr (ph. AT, RS, DR, MAG); Shelby Co (1) at Ensley 19 Apr (ph. RH, CRu, m.ob.), and (1) at Shelby Farms Park 21 Apr (SDa); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 15 May (ph. JWy).

Western Meadowlark: Shelby Co (1) at Eagle Lake Refuge 3 Mar (ph. au. CRu); Humphreys Co (2) continued from winter at DRU with reports 5 Mar (RS) and 10–11 Mar (GBr, JSc, TLR, AF).

Rusty Blackbird: Blount Co (250) at Springbrook Park 2 Mar (max. RWi) was a notable count.

Brewer's Blackbird: Perry Co (1) at the Stoll Farm 14 Mar (RS); Marion Co (1) in Jasper 16 Mar (ph. TL, TLR); Fayette Co (2) at the Winstead Turf Farm 11 Apr (RS, AT, DR); Shelby Co (2) was the most reported at Shelby Farms Park 18/26 Mar (RP), and (1) at Eagle Lake Refuge 30 Mar (JV, CRu); Lake Co (14) at Robinson Bayou 21 Apr (ph. max. AT, RS); Hamilton Co (2) at Old McDonald's Farm Area 19 Apr (ph. SWh, KWh).

Swainson's Warbler: generally rare anywhere in the central basin, there were two in Davidson Co: (1) at Radnor Lake 28–30 Apr (au. MJ, RHe, m.ob.), and (1) in a private yard 29 Apr (au. MJ); Humphreys Co (1) at DRU 11 May (ph. CRu, RS, AT) was rare for the county.

Mourning Warbler: Davidson Co (4) at Radnor L SP (ph. au. max. DR, AL, BC, JWy) 16 May was a notable high count.

Cape May Warbler: Hamilton Co (16) at Point Park 26 Apr (max. BDR) was a notable high count.

Northern Parula: Shelby Co (85) at Meeman-Shelby Forest SP 12 Apr (ph. max. SDi, CRu) was an impressive count.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Hamilton Co (58) at Point Park 28 Apr (max. BDR) was a noteworthy count.

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[1] 2024 Tennessee State Climate Summary, Tennessee Climate Office * East Tennessee State University, Prepared by William Tollefson and Dr. Andrew Joyner

[2] eBird. 2025. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: http://www.ebird.org. (Accessed: May 5, 2025).

[3] *Birds of Tennessee - a New Annotated Checklist*, Scott G. Somershoe and Christopher A. Sloan (2015)

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WBa - Wade Baker
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KBa – Kathryn Barrow
MBe – Matthan Beachy
KB - Kyle Bess
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DB – Don Blunk
SBr - Sue Bradley
GB – Gary Brunvoll
ABu – Andrew Burgess
RBu - Rachel Burgess
BBu – Bob Butler
TC - Ted Caldwell
KAC – Kevin Calhoun
PDC – Phillip D. Casteel
BC – Baily Crable
MCr - Maria Crowe
TCr - Terry Crowe
HD – Heather Davis
SDa – Sarah Davis
RD – Robert Deegan
SDi - Sophie Dismukes
BDR - Bruce Dralle
ADu - Ariel Dunham
PD - Paula Dycus
KDE – K. Dean Edwards
SE - Sally Edwards
TEd – Tommy Edwards
FF - Frank Fekel
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BF – Bob Ford
OF – Obed Frixzen
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GG - Graham Gerdeman
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